

The Islamic Civilizations

A. The Land of Arabia

1. Barren wilderness and desert kept Arabia isolated until the birth of Islam.
2. Settled by the descendants of Abraham through Hagar's (his wife's hand-maiden), son Ishmael.
3. Bedouins: nomadic herdsman with little organized gov't
4. Some cities developed along major trades routes: Mecca, Medina

B. The Religion of Islam

1. The founder

- a. Muhammad, claiming to be the last and greatest prophet of Allah, founded Islam.
- b. He believed the angel Gabriel gave him a revelation to warn the people of Allah's judgment.
- c. His teaching was rejected by the people of Mecca; conflicts forced him to flee to Medina: the Hegira (Flight) in 722. There, he was well received and his message spread.

2. The holy book of Islam: the Koran (recitation)

- a. Central doctrine: the unity of Islam
- b. Allah is to be feared because he will reward good and punish evil.
- c. The text of the Koran parallels the writing of both Judaism and Christianity, sharing characters and some of the stories. The teachings—as written from Muhammad's recitations—seeks to correct the errors of the other two monotheistic faiths.

the People of the Book →

3. The Five Pillars of Islam

- a. Reciting the confession "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet."
- b. Reciting prayers 5 times a day while facing Mecca.
- c. Giving alms to the poor.